

Appl. No. 10/644,442
Amdt. Dated May 3, 2005
Reply to Office action of April 27, 2005

REMARKS

The Applicants have carefully reviewed the Office action dated April 27, 2005 and thank Examiner Binda for his detailed review of the pending claims and indication of allowable subject matter. This response is timely filed within the shortened statutory period and the Applicants believe that no additional fee is due. However, if such an additional fee is due, please charge deposit account 07-1360 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

In response to the Office action, the Applicants have amended the claims to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. In the course of amending the application no new matter has been introduced. Specifically, claims 1, 3, 5-6, 12, 14 and 18 are amended and claims 2, 4, 10, 13 and 16 are now canceled. Accordingly, claims 1, 3, 5-9, 11-12, 14-15 and 17-20 remain in the present application. The Applicants respectfully request allowance of the claims in view of the amendments and following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office action indicated that claims 4-6 and 16 contained allowable subject matter. The claims were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, the Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 12 and 18 to include the allowable subject matter of the end portions of each radial element including a groove for receiving adhesive. Accordingly, all presently pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

Claim Objections

The Office action objected to claim 1 because the feature described in line 11, "the tube" should be changed to "the tubular member". Such amendment was made to claim 1 in the present response and accordingly, the objection should be removed.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103

The Office action rejected various combinations of the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103. These rejections are now moot in view of the amendments to independent claims 1, 12 and 18, in which the Applicants added allowable subject matter. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request removal of the rejections.

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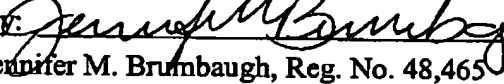
Conclusion

The Applicants believe the present case is in condition for allowance. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner pass the case to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: May 3, 2005

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